

BLM-Utah

Sage-grouse Conservation Efforts

On December 18, 2009, BLM-Utah issued Information Bulletin (IB) No. UT 2010-007, titled, “Initiation of Utah BLM Sage-grouse Policy Working Group and Identification of Team Members.” The purpose of this IB was to initiate the development of a BLM-Utah sage-grouse policy that will identify conservation measures, planning guidance, and mitigation practices that will eliminate, reduce, or minimize threats to Gunnison and greater sage-grouse and their habitats on BLM-administered lands in Utah. This policy will be drafted by a working group consisting of BLM wildlife biologists, resource specialists, and managers from around the state, as well as representatives from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The overall goal of the working group is to develop an updated sage-grouse management policy for BLM-Utah. This guidance will incorporate new information such as recent research conducted on sage-grouse and sagebrush within the state as well as sage-grouse/energy development interactions from other states, the State of Utah’s new Greater Sage-grouse Management Plan (2009), the BLM National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy (2004), and any new sage-grouse conservation policies issued by the BLM-Washington Office. Final policy will be consistent with sage-grouse policies issued by surrounding BLM State Offices.

Additional BLM-Utah sage-grouse conservation efforts include:

The Cedar City Field Office and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources are developing a monitoring strategy for crucial sage-grouse habitat associated with wind power development. The project is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to facilitate wind energy development. The baseline study will start in the spring of 2010 and continue through 2011.

Working through the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development, a coalition of Federal and State agencies working together to provide large-scale conservation solutions, BLM-Utah has conducted habitat maintenance and enhancement treatments on approximately 250,000 acres of public land to benefit sage-grouse.

